

his mission, a thousand copies of the forthcoming standard edition of De Sacy with the usual alternative readings. The number of Auxiliary and Branch Societies and Associations in Great Britain and Ireland is 3031; the number in Canada is close upon 1000.

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY issued during the past year 1,676,232 copies, raising the issues from the foundation of the Society, in 1816, to 42,083,816. The receipts for the year were \$598,641. They employed 311 colporteurs. Their work shews a great advance in China, where the circulation has advanced from 103,000 copies to 181,000, and in the Levant, where the growth is from 43,000 to 56,000.

THE NATIONAL BIBLE SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND reports an income of about \$157,000 for last year and a total issue of 481,166 copies. THE HIBERNIAN BIBLE SOCIETY had an income from all sources of \$22,500 and circulated 57,513 copies. The total number of copies issued by the above named societies last year was 5,179,547. If the Continental and other societies were included the number could not be far short of *six millions*.

### The Missionary Problem.

WE invite the attention of our readers to the following admirable address delivered by Rev. Dr. W. Fleming Stevenson, of Dublin, Convener of the Committee on Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, at the close of the Mission Conference.

The fact that this conference emphasises is the growth of a missionary spirit. We have met this evening under the highest sanction of our Church, under the presidency of a Moderator whom we all honour, and for no other purpose than to think and hear of Missions. A hundred years ago it would have been impossible. A hundred years ago missions were denounced by the very Churches that are forward in them to-day. There was not a Church in Great Britain that had the missionary spirit. There was scarcely a missionary sermon or a missionary collection. Contrast that with the missionary literature of to-day, with the crowd of missionary meetings that will be held next month, with the brilliant speakers that will plead the missionary cause, men of the highest intellect and the highest rank, with the generation that lifts the missionary to a place among its heroes, and raises statues to him in the public ways. The work that has been done is even more striking than the change of attitude. A hundred years ago no Church in Great Britain or America claimed a missionary, or as a Church rejoiced over a

pagan convert. Not only the missionary societies but the missionaries could be counted on the fingers. What can we show to-day? Seventy-two societies, an army of three thousand missionaries, and two millions and a quarter of Christian people gathered out from heathenism. There is a stupendous fact, but its real significance only appears upon analysis. The mere bulk is something—a Christian population more than twice as large as all the Protestants of Ireland and rescued right out of idolatry; nearly as many missionaries as there are ministers in broad Scotland. Now, break up these figures. Remember that they represent a multitude of Christian churches emerging out of heathen populations. Remember that they represent a missionary activity that touches every part of the heathen world. They are made up of separate communities, each of which is exercising a powerful influence and at a multitude of points. Almost the whole of Polynesia is Christian. Every coast of Africa is seized, Greenland and Patagonia have their Churches. The feet of them that publish the Gospel of peace traverse the roads from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin, from Burnah to the Yellow Sea. A survey of Missions has become a survey of the world. And what obstacles have been overcome to reach this result! Within our generation China was inaccessible to the Gospel. Japan was impregnable. The heart of Africa was untraced and unknown. Now, look a little deeper into the figures. It may be only a handful of missionaries at a single point, but they are translating the Bible, pouring Christian thought into the literature of a whole people. These hundred years of modern missions have placed the Bible within intelligible reach of perhaps five hundred millions of people. Their line is gone out through all the earth, their words to the world's end. We see the plans of God unrolled before our eyes. And what are they? That the whole world may be touched by the Gospel; that it may not only touch the individual, but penetrate the tribal life, and the national life in every place, and mould the proudest and most populous races by its teaching. Such a plan can be carried out only under certain conditions, and one of these is the growth of the missionary spirit. We are living while another condition is fulfilled. Commerce and enterprise are compelling us to approach the vast circle of heathenism at every point. They are bringing Christian and heathen races together. They are preparing the way for the missionary. It is an age also more fertile in discovery and invention than any other; and the practical drift of the vast forces thus set in motion is towards the closer and easier contact of men with men. The railway, the steamship, the printing press, and the telegraph, all tend in that direction. These